



Discover!
Finding Faith in Life

Background Reflection

At times it seems that Baptism can take a backseat to other aspects of our faith. For many of us, Baptism happened so long ago that we remember it only slightly, or only through photographs and family stories.

For all Catholics, Baptism deserves closer attention. It is the root of our life in God. It is central to our faith. Only by passing through the waters of Baptism can we enter into the fullness of the love and grace God offers us. Only by understanding what happens in this sacrament can we truly understand what we receive in the other sacraments. Baptism marks Christians distinctly and definitively.

As we travel through the Season of Lent, accompanying those preparing to receive Baptism and readying ourselves for the renewal of our baptismal promises at Easter, let us learn more about Baptism and about how everything in the Christian life flows from this initial, indispensable gift.

Family Activities

- Read together the Featured Story on page 34 of *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Genesis 7:1–5). Ask your child to retell the story to you in her or his own words. Then invite your child to ask any questions he or she may have. If you find any questions difficult to answer on your own, make a plan to look up answers together.
- Find a cookbook that you enjoy, and spend some time looking up recipes for meatless meals together with your child. Invite your child to point out foods he or she would like to try. You might allow him or her to mark pages with reusable sticky flags or other bookmarks. Plan to make at least one of the recipes on a Friday during Lent.
- Watch the video "Ash Wednesday and Lent in 60 seconds With LEGO!" (YouTube, 1:15) together. Take some time to work on a family Lenten plan that includes giving up things that you don't really need, giving to others, and saying special prayers.

Preparing for Easter

Genesis 7:1–5

Prayer

Loving God, you walk with us through all moments of life. You take us through every challenge and every struggle. Fill our life with your Spirit, give us courage to make good choices, and bring us closer to you. Amen.

People of Faith

Saint Brigid of Ireland (c. 452–524)

Saint Brigid led a large community of nuns, and her monastery was a center of faith, art, and care for those who are poor. On her feast day, people make crosses out of reeds, like she did, and they hang them over their front doors. Brigid's feast day is February 1.

Prayer

Pray this prayer together as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.

Loving God, we are grateful for the season of Lent in which we can pause and prepare our hearts for the joy of Easter. Help us become closer to you as we journey through these forty days. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



Find and circle the words from the Featured Story on page 34 of *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Genesis 7:1-5).

animals boat family pairs
reproduce clean flood right
birds commanded forty unclean

C O M M A N D E D Q
L F O R T Y H D B S
E L L P A I R S O T
A O K U N C L E A N
N O E B I R D S T Q
B D F A M I L Y F F
D V D C A G Z U S M
K D Z X L H S A E F
F G M T S T B T I L
R E P R O D U C E Y



Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.

Leader: Loving God, you brought Noah safely through the forty days of the Flood. Help us prepare our hearts during these forty days of Lent and remember that we too are saved through the waters of Baptism.

All: *(hands folded and bowing)* **Be with us as we prepare our hearts.**

Leader: Loving God, we recall the incredible sacrifice of Jesus. Help us focus on ways that we can give up something or do good works to help us grow in faithfulness.

All: *(hands folded and bowing)* **Be with us as we prepare our hearts.**

Leader: Loving God, during this Lenten season, help us recall that we can always come to you in prayer. Be with us as we come to you in prayer this season.

All: *(hands folded and bowing)* **Be with us as we prepare our hearts.**

Leader: Loving God, thank you for the gift of Baptism and the promises we made to be followers of Christ. Increase our faith and help us to draw closer to you as we prepare for the joy of Easter. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

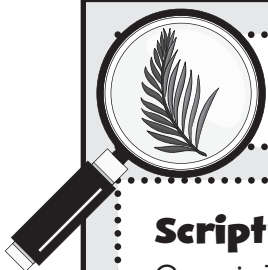


Lent



**Preparing
for
Easter**





Lesson at a Glance

Scripture Focus

Genesis 7:1–5

Lesson Goals

- to state that Lent is a season of preparation for Easter
- to explain that during Lent we remember that we went through the waters of Baptism and were saved by God
- to state that in Lent we recall that Jesus saves us through his death and Resurrection

Catechism References

1094–1095, 1217–1220, 1438

Church Year Calendar

A Church year calendar is available in black-and-white and full-color at www.smp.org/discover_grade2.

Key Words

unclean animal, reproduce, Passion, Resurrection, Holy Week, penance

Music Suggestions

- “I Need You Now (Live),” by Matt Redman (sixstepsrecords/Sparrow Records)
- “Be with Me, Lord,” by Tom Booth (OCP)

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children’s Bible* and the Lent activity booklet
- pencils and paper
- a sample paper-plate ark
- paper plates, two for each child
- sets of markers, including all colors of the rainbow plus at least brown or gray, one set for each small group
- a ruler and a pair of scissors for each small group
- a hole punch
- paper fasteners (brads), one for each child
- a board or poster to write on
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

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As we travel through the season of Lent, accompanying those preparing to receive Baptism and readying ourselves for the renewal of our baptismal promises at Easter, let us learn more about Baptism and about how everything in the Christian life flows from this initial, indispensable gift.



Get Ready! (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of the Lent activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross. Then say, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read aloud the prayer on page 1 of the activity booklet. Invite all the children to say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross.

Engage Activity

- Gather the children in a large circle in a central part of the room. Invite them to think about a time when they chose to do the right thing, even though it made them look or feel different from other people.
- Invite responses from volunteers. Assure the children that it can be challenging to do the right thing sometimes, especially if we're concerned about what others might think about us.
- Tell the children that in today's story, they will learn about one man who was not afraid to look different from everyone around him. Explain that his courage saved many people and animals from a natural disaster.



Dive In! (15 minutes)

Scripture Focus

- Invite the children to find Genesis 6:9–9:17 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 32–33 and 36). Point out the green leaf at the beginning and end of the passage.
- Have the children turn to the Featured Story on page 34. Explain that the green leaves on this page mark that this is a shortened version of the same Scripture passage found on the surrounding pages.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 34–35 and describe what they see. Invite them to imagine what it would be like to build such a big boat, or ark, as the one Noah built.
- Read the Scripture passage to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What did God ask Noah to do? (*He asked him to go into the boat with his whole family, plus pairs of animals.*)
 - Why did God ask Noah to do this? (*God wanted to be sure there would be enough of each animal after the Flood to reproduce on the Earth.*)

- What was God planning to do? (God was going to send enough rain to cause a flood that would wipe out all living beings on the Earth, except those Noah had rescued.)
- What did Noah do? (Noah did everything that God commanded.)
- Have the children turn to the activity on page 2 of the activity booklet and complete it. *Solution:*



Lent

Understand It!

- Read aloud the Understand It! on page 35, or have a volunteer read it.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review some of the key points with them:
 - We imitate others to be like the people around us. It takes courage to be different from others.
 - Noah had the courage to be different from others. When others were sinning, he and his family served God. So God saved Noah and his family from the Flood.
 - Others may have made fun of Noah for building the ark, but the boat kept Noah, his family, and the animals safe.
 - If we do what God wants us to do, even when it makes us different from others, God will bless us for it.
- Explain to the children that the story of Noah and the Flood reminds us of our Baptism. Remind them that we are saved from Original Sin through the waters of Baptism. Point out that Noah, his family, and the animals were saved as they passed through the waters of the Great Flood.

Live It!

- Read aloud the Live It! on page 35, or have a volunteer read it.
- Ask the children to take out a pencil and paper, and instruct them to write down two things:
 - Write down one idea for how you can listen to God this week.
 - Write down one idea for how you can serve God this week.
- Encourage the children to take their paper home and reread it later. Explain that this plan is just for their own reminder, not for anyone else to see.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in the Tell It! on page 35.
- Invite volunteers to retell the Scripture story in their own words, using the images shown. (*Image 1 shows Noah listening to God. Image 2 shows Noah leading animals into the ark. Image 3 shows the ark floating on the floodwaters as rain falls.*)

**Discover! (25 minutes)****Core Learning Activity (Craft)****Paper-Plate Ark**

- Prepare a sample paper-plate ark in advance that you can use to demonstrate the steps to the children.
- Tell the children that they will make a paper-plate ark to remind them of the ark Noah built to survive the Flood.
- Arrange the children into small groups to share art supplies. Distribute two paper plates and a metal brad to each child, and give each group a ruler, a pair of scissors, and a set of markers.
- Show the children how to use a ruler and a marker to draw a straight line across both of their paper plates. Have them set one plate aside. Instruct them to draw a rectangle topped by a triangle—a house shape—above the line on the second plate.
- Show the children how to use the scissors to cut around the house and line on the second plate. They will end up with the house shape (what they drew) on top of a boat shape (the rest of the paper plate). Explain that this is their ark. Allow them to color their arks as they choose. They may wish to add some animals to their arks.
- Instruct the children to color a rainbow around half of their first (uncut) paper plate. Tell them to color the rainbow only up to the line dividing the plate.

- Go around the groups and punch a hole in the center of each child's two plates.
- Show the children how to attach the paper plates together—ark plate on top of the rainbow plate—with brads through the center hole of both plates, so that the rainbow can rotate around behind the ark.

Process the Activity

- Remind the children that the story of Noah is a story of passing through waters to be saved by God—just like the story of our own Baptism.
- Explain to the children that we prepare for Easter by remembering our Baptism and baptismal promises. Tell them that this season of preparation for Easter is called Lent.
- Tell the children that at the end of Noah's story, we read that God sent the rainbow as a sign of his promise to never again destroy the Earth with a flood.

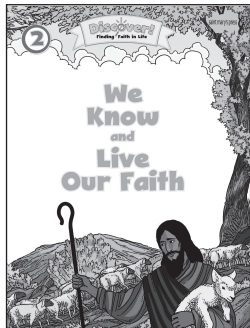
Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the additional activities on page 251 in its place.

Core Teaching

- Explain to the children that during Lent the whole Church recalls the **Passion** and death of Jesus and prepares to celebrate his **Resurrection** at Easter. Jesus' *Passion* refers to his suffering to save us: from his betrayal after the Last Supper on Holy Thursday, until his death for us on the cross. Jesus' *Resurrection* is his rising from the dead to new life on Easter. Recall that by his death and Resurrection, Jesus saved us from sin.
- Tell the group that the Church uses the color purple during Lent to symbolize our preparation, just as purple symbolizes preparation during Advent. Explain that during Lent, purple also stands for sorrow. Point out that we feel sad about the reality of sin and about Jesus' suffering.
- Share that Lent ends at the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday during **Holy Week**. Tell the children that Holy Week is the week when we remember Jesus' suffering and death. Explain that it begins with Palm Sunday and ends with Easter Sunday, when we celebrate the Resurrection.
- Recall that Easter reminds us of Baptism. Explain that we prepare for Easter in the season of Lent by remembering our baptismal promises to follow Christ. Remind the children that in Baptism we pass through water, as Noah did, to enter into new life with God. Share that Baptism gives us courage to act in the ways God shows us are right, just as Noah followed God and was saved.

- Tell the children that because we love and honor Jesus, we want to become better Christians and make good choices. Explain that Lent is a time to focus on following Jesus with special practices:
 - During Lent, we give to the Church and to those in need. We practice saying no to some things we want so that we can say yes to the best and most important things.
 - During Lent, we practice acts of **penance**—that is, prayers or good actions that show we are sorry for sin. Penance helps us to prepare for the Easter celebration.
- Ask the children some questions to check for comprehension, such as the following:
 - What is the season of Lent? (*Lent is a time when the whole Church recalls the Passion and death of Jesus and prepares to celebrate his Resurrection at Easter.*)
 - What are Jesus' Passion and Resurrection? (*Jesus' Passion refers to his suffering for us. His Resurrection refers to his act of rising from the dead.*)
 - What color do we see in Church during Lent, and why? (*We see the color purple, which symbolizes preparation and sadness.*)
 - How is Baptism like the story of Noah? (*Both involve passing through water to be saved by God.*)
 - What is an act of penance? (*An act of penance is a good action that shows we are sorry for sin. Penance helps us prepare for Easter.*)
- Have the children turn to page 4 of the activity booklet. Read aloud the "People of Faith" section. Add any other information you know about Saint Brigid of Ireland, and encourage the children to say, "Saint Brigid, pray for us," during the next week.



We Know and Live Our Faith

The following article in the *We Know and Live Our Faith* resource corresponds to concepts introduced in this lesson:

- "God the Father Sent His Son to Us," page 12

Read the selection aloud, or invite a volunteer to read, as time allows. Check for understanding by asking several questions. You may want to summarize the key concepts for the children.



Go! (10 minutes)

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this lesson, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take time to get input from the group, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - Lent is a season of preparation for Easter.
 - During Lent, we remember that we went through the waters of Baptism and were saved by God.
 - In Lent, we recall that Jesus saves us through his death and Resurrection.

Short Closing Prayer (optional)

Note: Use this prayer if you do not intend to use the longer prayer service on the next page to close this lesson.

- Begin prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God,” followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Lead the children in the following prayer:
 - Loving God, you brought Noah, his family, and the animals safely through the Flood on the Ark. Help us use the season of Lent to recall how we were saved through the waters of Baptism and to focus on how we might be better Christians. We look forward to celebrating the Resurrection of Christ on Easter.
- Invite the children to respond with “Amen,” and then close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Prayer Service

God's Love Saves Us

Tell the children that they will fold their hands and bow their heads each time they repeat the response, "Be with us as we prepare our hearts." Practice this so the children are familiar with the action and response.

Lent

Leader: Let us begin our prayer with the Sign of the Cross. *(All make Sign of the Cross.)* Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God. *(Allow about 10 seconds of silence.)*

Leader: Loving God, you brought Noah safely through the forty days of the Flood. Help us prepare our hearts during these forty days of Lent and remember that we too are saved through the waters of Baptism.

All: *(with hands folded and bowing)*
Be with us as we prepare our hearts.

Leader: Loving God, we recall the incredible sacrifice of Jesus. Help us focus on ways that we can give up something or do good works to help us grow in faithfulness.

All: *(with hands folded and bowing)*
Be with us as we prepare our hearts.

Leader: Loving God, during this Lenten season, help us recall that we can always come to you in prayer. Be with us as we come to you in prayer this season.

All: *(with hands folded and bowing)*
Be with us as we prepare our hearts.

Leader: Loving God, thank you for the gift of Baptism and the promises we made to be followers of Christ. Increase our faith and help us to draw closer to you as we prepare for the joy of Easter. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Close by playing one of the music suggestions or another appropriate Lenten song of your choice.

Additional Activities

Materials Needed

- four large containers of water
- four trays of items, such as a stone, a foam ball, a feather, a block of wood, a rubber band, a metal clip, and so on

Materials Needed

- none

Materials Needed

- a computer with internet access
- a computer projector
- blank paper

Sink or Float (15 minutes)

- Prepare four stations ahead of time with the same materials at each station: a large container of water (preferably with high sides) and a tray of items.
- Arrange the children into four small groups and have them gather around the stations.
- Invite the groups to look at their tray of items. Tell them to discuss among themselves which items will sink or float. Invite each child in each group to place at least one item into the group's water tub to find out whether it will float.
- Gather the children back into the large group. Invite them to think about how difficult it must be to build a huge, heavy object that floats, especially when loaded with animals and people. Lead them to understand that Noah's project was not an easy one.

Alphabet Ark Memory Game (15 minutes)

- Clear a large area in the middle of the classroom.
- Gather the children in a large circle on the floor. Share the following instructions:
 - The child who is at the starting place will say, "Noah took an [animal] on the ark," filling in the blank with an animal name beginning with A.
 - The next child will do the same thing, repeating the A animal and adding a B animal.
 - The next child must repeat the A and B animals and add a C animal, and so on.
 - The game will continue until someone forgets an animal in the series. Then it will start over again at A with the next person in the circle, until time is up.
- Pick a child at random to start the game. Affirm the group's efforts to play a good game and remember one another's contributions.

Making Lenten Plans (15 minutes)

- Show the video "Ash Wednesday and Lent in 60 seconds With LEGO!" (YouTube, 1:15) to the group.
- Ask the children to name some features of Lent that the video explains. Affirm all correct responses.
- Distribute the blank paper. Invite the children to write or draw their own plan for fasting, giving to others, and saying special prayers during Lent.
- Ask the children to take home their plans and complete them later, if they need more time. Encourage them to check and follow their plans each day.

God Saves Noah's Family



Genesis 7:1–5 (For the full story, read Genesis 6:9–9:17.)

1 The LORD said to Noah, "Go into the boat with your whole family; I have found that you are the only one in all the world who does what is right. 2 Take with you seven pairs of each kind of ritually clean animal, but only one pair of each kind of **unclean animal**. 3 Take also seven pairs of every kind of bird. Do this so that every kind of animal and bird will be kept alive to **reproduce** again on the earth. 4 Seven days from now I am going to send rain that will fall for forty days and forty nights in order to destroy all the living beings that I have made." 5 And Noah did everything that the LORD commanded.

unclean animal an animal that Jewish people had the custom of not eating, such as fish without fins or scales

reproduce to have babies

Understand It!

We imitate others. You might like to wear the kind of clothes other children wear. You may want the games they have. Noah was strong enough to be different from others. When he lived, everyone was sinning. Only Noah and his family still served God. So when the world was punished by a flood, God saved Noah and his family. God told Noah to build a boat, or ark. Noah worked on the boat even though people probably made fun of him. This boat kept Noah, his family, and animals from drowning.

You need to have courage like Noah to be different. Even when other children do the wrong thing, you need to stand strong and not sin. God will bless you for it.

Live It!

Noah listened to God and served him. We listen to God when we pray and read the Bible. We serve him when we sing and pray at Mass. We serve him when we are kind to other people. How will you listen to God this week? How will you serve him this week?

Tell It!



Using the pictures above, retell this story in your own words.

